UNIT-2

OTHER INFORMATION AND DESK FUNCTIONS

Custody and Control of Keys

To ensure the safety and security of the guests' belongings, the front desk must keep the room keys in safe custody. It is important for the front desk to exercise a strict control on the room keys for the following reasons:

➢ It prevents unauthorized access to the guest room.

➢ It can be established who all entered the guest room.

➢ It ensures security of the guest and the guest's belongings. It prevents intrusion of the guest's privacy.

➢ Hotels may use conventional hard key system or computerized door locking system for securing the guest rooms. In case electronic locking system is used in the hotel, guests

Safety Deposit Locker

A key concern for the guests is the safety of their belongings, especially cash, jewellery, and important documents. Hotels provide safe deposit lockers for these items. At the time of check-in, guests are advised to keep their valuables in the safe deposit lockers available at the front desk. Some hotels may also provide in-room safe deposit lockers, depending on the room category. These safe deposit lockers have a single key, and therefore only the guest can operate the locker.

Procedure for Using the Safe Deposit Locker

Every hotel has its own operating procedure for the allotment of safe deposit lockers. The following are the two stages of the standard procedure (Fig. 9.18):

- ➢ Issue of locker
- ➢ Surrender of locker

<u>**Issue of locker**</u>

When a guest wishes to use the locker facility extended by the hotel, the following procedure is followed:

- An empty safe deposit locker is allocated to the guest with the locker number.

- A safe deposit box registration card is handed over to the guest and the guest is requested to fill the necessary information.

- The locker is assigned and the locker key is handed over to the guest.

- The guest keeps his valuables and documents in the locker, locks the box, and carries the key.

- The guest can use the safe deposit box as and when required; he/she is required to make an entry in the safe deposit locker register for each use.

<u>**Surrender of locker**</u>

- When the guest surrenders the safe deposit box, the following procedure is followed:

- The guest is requested to withdraw the articles placed in the locker.

- The guest is requested to sign an acknowledgement that he/she has received all the articles placed in the safe deposit box.

- The guest surrenders the locker key to the front office agent.

Wake up call

In some hotels the wake up call to groups and crews is coordinated by bell desk. In such cases it is the responsibility of the bell captain on duty in the morning shift to prepare the wake call sheets of all the groups and crews in-house.

 Procedure

- ➢ The bell captain obtains the group folio numbers of all the groups/crews in-house which are expected to leave that day or crew/groups leaving the next day before 3 PM.

- ➢ He then prepares the wake call sheet of such groups by putting their room numbers and wake call time and baggage collection time/departure time from the hotel. These room numbers are again checked to ensure that all groups/crew members have received wake call.

- ➢ Once all such sheets are made, a summary of group/crew departure is prepared and is handed over to the assistant manager on duty. The assistant manager again checks these sheets, and co-ordinates the calling time with the group leader/airlines staff to ensure that wake call is given at the correct time.

- ➢ Once the wake call is finally confirmed, the bell captain on duty assigns duty to the bellboy to distribute these sheets to various departments so that necessary arrangements may be made for a smooth check-out. He also assigns the duty to bellboy to bring the luggage at the given time and arrange for the check-out.

Paging System

Apart from luggage handling the bell desk is also responsible for paging a guest. The paging is a system of locating the guest in the hotel. Many times the in-house guest expects a phone call or a visitor but decides not to wait in the room, and might decide to go to a public area such as bar, restaurant, swimming pool, lobby or lounge etc. of the hotel or may go out of the hotel. In such cases the hotel requests the guest to tell about his whereabouts through a location form This proforma may be kept in the stationery folder in the room as well as at the information section of the counter. Usually it is filled in by the guest but many times it may be filled in by the hotel staff on the instructions of the guest. The completed location form is kept in the key and mail racks. This information is sent to telephone department also (the guest may directly inform or the

front desk may do so). The purpose of the form is to earmark the area of paging and save time. In case of computer system the information is recorded in computer instead of location forms. In hotels different system

1. **Page Board System**

The most commonly used system is called 'page board system' or traditional system of paging in hotels. This is a simple system in which the bellboy/pageboy is required to carry a small board which has a small handle and small bells attached to it. The receptionist/informationist writes the name of the guest and his room number on the board, and the pageboy/bellboy carries this board to the public area which has been mentioned on the location form by the guest and keeps ringing the attached bells. This attracts the attention of the guest immediately. To avoid any embarrassment to the guest, no message etc. should be written on the page board. This method of paging may create disturbance to other guests in the area and if the guest has not left any whereabouts this system is time consuming as the paging might have to be done in various public areas one by one. In case the guest is in some meeting or conference, the bellboy should contact the organizer or secretary who will contact the guest himself.

2. **Public Addressing System**

Another system called as Public Address System (P.A. System) is used in some hotels these days. In hotels, piped/relayed/channeled music is played from a central room. One switch of the same is with the receptionist/informationist who on receiving the phone call or a visitor for a guest switches off the channeled/piped music from all public areas and announces the name and room number of the guest to be paged. This is transmitted to all public areas at the same time. This saves time as well as efforts of pageboy/bellboy. The communication skill of the person announcing are important in the system. His voice, manner of speech, modulation of voices, correct use of phrases, words and tone, etc. are very important. The tone should be friendly, interested and helpful.